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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Information

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AND-28-41
May 23, 1941

Part I - STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

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AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

SUMMARY OF FOREIGN DEVELOPMENTS: FINLAND: On the first of May there was available a total of only 70,000 tons of bread grain, including 22,000 tons expected from Sweden and 10,000 tons of seed for winter grain, the latter being subject to use only in case of extreme necessity. There will be required for consumption between May 1 and September 15, when the new crop becomes available, a total of 166,000 tons of bread grain. If it is assumed that there will arrive in the meantime from North and South America shipments now afloat, as well as cargoes bought and still unshipped, the foregoing indicated shortage of around 96,000 tons will be reduced by approximately 50,000 tons. This would still leave approximately 46,000 tons to be imported in the period mentioned. The Minister of Supply has indicated that the grain should be shipped from transatlantic ports not later than the end of June next if it is to be available when needed.

DENMARK: Rain is badly needed and the crop appears in danger from continued cold and dry weather. The anticipated increase in butter production has not materialized and cattle are still unable to graze pastures. Butter production is now about 40 percent below normal but exports continue as planned. A sum amounting to 1,250,000 kroner (\$250,000) was made available to farmers by government subsidies in March to enable them to buy 4,270 tons of seeds for sowing purposes.

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Part II - FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE

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AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE BY THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE for a group of outstanding young Central and South American engineers to spend a year studying the methods and techniques of the Rural Electrification Administration. The first two are expected to reach Washington around the middle of June. About half a dozen others are expected to leave their respective countries within the next few weeks. The plan of having a group of engineers from the other American republics spend a year as student-members of the REA staff was the outgrowth of a cooperative effort by the various American Governments concerned, to facilitate and expand mutual understanding of technical electrification problems.

The Coordinator for Commercial and Cultural Relations between the American Republics has made available funds to pay the travelling expenses of the engineers from the Southern republics and to provide each of them a monthly allowance of \$135 for the training period with the REA--equal to the amount paid to the United States engineering trainees whom the REA takes in each year.

A CONTRACT FOR CONSTRUCTION IN HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT, OF 200 DEMOUNTABLE HOUSING units for families--the first demountable construction under the Government's defense "stopgap" housing program--has just been awarded by the Farm Security Administration of the Department of Agriculture. The houses will be built on a 20-acre site. A contract for six 62-men demountable dormitories to be built on the same site for single men was let last week by the Farm Security Administration. Construction of an additional 100 or 150 demountable houses is planned in the near future by the FSA on an adjacent 10-acre tract. The typical house will accommodate four persons and will be of wood-frame construction, featuring prefabricated plywood paneling. Additional defense housing is needed in Hartford for aircraft workers.

SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE CLAUDE R. WICKARD HAS ANNOUNCED that the Commodity Credit Corporation is moving corn out of the Middle West for storage in Buffalo, Albany, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and other eastern cities with a view to maintaining ample corn reserves in that section of the country to meet all immediate needs. The Secretary said ten and one-half million bushels would be placed in storage in this area. About half of this amount is already in storage in the area or in transit. The scheme will serve a threefold purpose: It will assure feeders, dairymen, poultrymen, and consumers in the Northeastern territory of a reserve feed supply which will guard against any transportation shortage which might develop due to the defense effort; it will provide consumers in that area with corn at fairly stable price levels and it will clear out space now occupied in the Middle West and needed for the storage of the new wheat crop.

DELEGATES TO THE THREE-DAY NATIONAL NUTRITION CONFERENCE FOR DEFENSE, which opens in Washington May 26 will be asked to answer seven broad questions in planning national foods needs:

1. How much responsibility shall Government assume and what shall our national economic policy be with respect to nutrition?
2. What is the most effective way to solve the twin problems of undernutrition and of farm surpluses?
3. How can we send to Britain the food she needs and at the same time give all American families a fairly good diet?
4. Can nutritionally adequate diets for all be achieved as a result of the employment and wage increases to be expected this year and next?
5. Shall we attempt to promote inexpensive methods of distribution of all basic foods if it means displacing unneeded workers in the marketing system?
6. What remedies can be proposed for preventing widespread nutrition disabilities in view of the fact that nutritional diseases probably constitute our greatest medical problem, not from the point of view of deaths, but from the point of view of disability and economic loss?
7. What expansion will be necessary throughout our educational system--in public schools, colleges, and medical schools--to facilitate wider dissemination of nutrition information and the extension of opportunities for adult education in this field?

SUMMARY OF FOREIGN DEVELOPMENTS: GERMANY: The combined meat and fat ration, except butter, of farmers will be reduced effective June 2 from 1,060 grams weekly to 860 grams. Since the farmers' meat ration is determined by the total number of livestock, it may be assumed that the reduced ration is an indication of reduced livestock numbers. A reduction of 20 percent in the meat rations of other consumers, effective the same date, is a further indication that livestock numbers are lower.

For the period June 2 to June 29 meat rations for normal consumers will be reduced by 100 grams weekly, or from 500 grams to 400 grams, while the total meat rations for heaviest and heavy workers will be cut by 200 grams weekly, or from 1,200 grams to 1,000 grams and from 1,000 grams to 800 grams respectively. Meat rations for self-providers, by which is meant farmers or breeders who slaughter their own livestock, will be reduced by 200 grams weekly per person. Meat rations for children up to 6 years, and for "long and night" workers remain unchanged. Indications are that arrangements will be made for an exchange of bread cards for sugar cards.

The German press attributes the reduction in the meat ration to unavoidable difficulties in production caused by the war and an increase in meat consumption. The press points out that more than one-half of the German meat requirements is normally satisfied by the sale of pork products. At the beginning of the war, it is claimed, domestic fodder was used for fattening 80 percent of the hogs and imported fodder for the remaining 20 percent. It is now admitted that this 20 percent deficit cannot be taken care of by domestic production. Press reports also cite the prolonged period of fattening required for hogs as a further handicap. This period results from the lack of concentrates and the necessity of using ordinary fodder, mainly potatoes, for fattening purposes. The butter fat and cheese rations reflect more favorable cattle conditions.

The increase in the consumption of meat since the war began is attributed to a number of reasons. The press mentions the continued expansion of the armed forces and the fact that "millions of new soldiers" enjoy more generous rations. The fact that there has been an increase of several million in the number of heavy and heaviest workers, and especially long and night workers, is also given as a cause of increased meat consumption. A further drain on meat supplies is reported as being caused by the 2,000,000 prisoners of war to which must be added, as an additional burden, 330,000 Serbian prisoners, and approximately 1,000,000 foreign workers now being fed in Germany.

PORTUGAL: Reliable trade sources indicate that the 1941 wheat crop is expected to be between 450,000 and 500,000 metric tons (17,000,000 and 18,000,000 bushels) and that such a crop would suffice for the country's needs provided the present mixture of corn and wheat flour is continued until the 1942 crop.

